

110TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 1510

To require the Consumer Product Safety Commission to promulgate consumer product safety rules concerning the safety and labeling of portable generators.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 24, 2007

Mr. NELSON of Florida introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

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## A BILL

To require the Consumer Product Safety Commission to promulgate consumer product safety rules concerning the safety and labeling of portable generators.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Portable Generator  
5       Safety Act of 2007”.

6       **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7       Congress finds the following:

8               (1) Portable generators are frequently used to  
9       provide electricity during temporary power outages.

1       These generators use fuel-burning engines that emit  
2       carbon monoxide gas in their exhaust.

3           (2) In the last several years, hundreds of people  
4       nationwide have been seriously injured or killed due  
5       to exposure to carbon monoxide poisoning from port-  
6       able generators. From 2000 through 2006, at least  
7       260 carbon monoxide poisoning deaths related to  
8       portable generator use were reported to the Con-  
9       sumer Product Safety Commission. In the last three  
10      months of 2006 alone, 32 carbon monoxide deaths  
11      were linked to generator use.

12          (3) Virtually all of the serious injuries and  
13      deaths due to carbon monoxide from portable gen-  
14      erators were preventable. In many instances, con-  
15      sumers simply were unaware of the hazards posed by  
16      carbon monoxide.

17          (4) Since at least 1997, a priority of the Con-  
18      sumer Product Safety Commission has been to re-  
19      duce injuries and deaths resulting from carbon mon-  
20      oxide poisoning.

21          (5) On January 4, 2007, the Consumer Product  
22      Safety Commission adopted certain labeling stand-  
23      ards for portable generators (section 1407 of title  
24      16, Code of Federal Regulations), but such stand-

1       ards do not go far enough to reduce substantially  
2       the potential harm to consumers.

3           (6) The issuance of mandatory safety standards  
4       and labeling requirements to warn consumers of the  
5       dangers associated with portable generator carbon  
6       monoxide would reduce the risk of injury or death.

7   **SEC. 3. SAFETY STANDARD: REQUIRING EQUIPMENT OF**  
8                   **PORTABLE GENERATORS WITH CARBON**  
9                   **MONOXIDE INTERLOCK SAFETY DEVICES.**

10       Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-  
11       ment of this Act, the Consumer Product Safety Commis-  
12       sion shall promulgate consumer product safety rules, pur-  
13       suant to section 7 of the Consumer Product Safety Act  
14       (15 U.S.C. 2056), requiring, at a minimum, that every  
15       portable generator sold to the public for purposes other  
16       than resale shall be equipped with an interlock safety de-  
17       vice that—

18           (1) detects the level of carbon monoxide in the  
19       areas surrounding such portable generator; and

20           (2) automatically turns off the portable gener-  
21       ator before the level of carbon monoxide reaches a  
22       level that would cause serious bodily injury or death  
23       to people.

1 **SEC. 4. LABELING AND INSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS.**

2 Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-  
3 ment of this Act, the Consumer Product Safety Commis-  
4 sion shall promulgate consumer product safety rules, pur-  
5 suant to section 7 of the Consumer Product Safety Act  
6 (15 U.S.C. 2056), requiring, at a minimum, the following:

7 (1) WARNING LABELS.—Each portable gener-  
8 ator sold to the public for purposes other than resale  
9 shall have a large, prominently displayed warning  
10 label in both English and Spanish on the exterior  
11 packaging, if any, of the portable generator and per-  
12 manently affixed on the portable generator regarding  
13 the carbon monoxide hazard posed by incorrect use  
14 of the portable generator. The warning label shall  
15 include the word “DANGER” printed in a large font  
16 that is no smaller than 1 inch tall, and shall include  
17 the following information, at a minimum, presented  
18 in a clear manner:

19 (A) Indoor use of a portable generator can  
20 kill quickly.

21 (B) Portable generators should be used  
22 outdoors only and away from garages and open  
23 windows.

24 (C) Portable generators produce carbon  
25 monoxide, a poisonous gas that people cannot  
26 see or smell.

1           (2) PICTOGRAM.—Each portable generator sold  
2           to the public for purposes other than resale shall  
3           have a large pictogram, affixed to the portable gen-  
4           erator, which clearly states “POISONOUS GAS”  
5           and visually depicts the harmful effects of breathing  
6           carbon monoxide.

7           (3) INSTRUCTION MANUAL.—The instruction  
8           manual, if any, that accompanies any portable gen-  
9           erator sold to the public for purposes other than re-  
10          sale shall include detailed, clear, and conspicuous  
11          statements that include the following elements:

12                 (A) A warning that portable generators  
13                 emit carbon monoxide, a poisonous gas that can  
14                 kill people.

15                 (B) A warning that people cannot smell,  
16                 see, or taste carbon monoxide.

17                 (C) An instruction to operate portable gen-  
18                 erators only outdoors and away from windows,  
19                 garages, and air intakes.

20                 (D) An instruction never to operate port-  
21                 able generators inside homes, garages, sheds, or  
22                 other semi-enclosed spaces, even if a person  
23                 runs a fan or opens doors and windows.

24                 (E) A warning that if a person begins to  
25                 feel sick, dizzy, or weak while using a portable

1 generator, that person should shut off the port-  
2 able generator, get to fresh air immediately,  
3 and consult a doctor.

4 **SEC. 5. PUBLIC OUTREACH.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the  
6 date of the enactment of this Act, the Consumer Product  
7 Safety Commission shall establish a program of public  
8 outreach to inform consumers of the dangers associated  
9 with the emission of carbon monoxide from portable gen-  
10 erators.

11 (b) TIME.—The program required by subsection (a)  
12 shall place emphasis on informing consumers of the dan-  
13 gers described in such subsection during the start of each  
14 hurricane season.

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